

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. Claims 1-4 and 6-34 are all the claims pending in the application. Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims define patentable subject matter.

CLAIM REJECTIONS - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4, 6-9, 14-16, 28 and 29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Widell (2,825,407). Applicant respectfully traverses the 35 U.S.C. § 102 rejection, as set forth below.

Amended claim 1 recites:

a male die, adapted to be opposed to a first face of a metallic plate member, the male die including a plurality of punches which are provided on the male die and arranged side by side in a first direction with a fixed pitch, the adjacent punches defining a gap therebetween, **the gap continuing from a first side face that is a side face of one of the adjacent punches to a second side face that is a side face of the other of the adjacent punches**; and

a guide member, formed with a guide face which supports a side portion of the male die, at least when the punches are pressed into the plate member in a second direction, to form through holes therein, the guide member formed with projections that support at least one of the first side face and the second side face.

The Examiner maintains that Widell teaches the features of claim 1 in Figs. 7-9.

Amended claim 1 recites that the gap continues from a first side face that is a side face of one of the adjacent punches to a second side face that is a side face of the other of the adjacent punches. In Widell, however, the punches 116 are inserted into the guide apertures 72 of the guide member 76 and supported by the guide member 76. As clearly seen in Fig. 9 of Widell,

there are no gaps that extend from one punch 116 to the next punch 116. Instead, the guide member 72 is arranged between the adjacent punches 116. At best, a small opening may be seen between the punch 116 and the guide aperture 72, but there is no gap that extends between the individual punches 116 themselves. That is, the gap does not continue from one of the adjacent punches 116, to the other of the adjacent punches 116.

Thus, Widell does not teach or suggest the gap continuing from a first side face that is a side face of one of the adjacent punches to a second side face that is a side face of the other of the adjacent punches, as recited in claim 1.

For at least the foregoing reasons, claim 1 is not anticipated or rendered obvious by the teaching of Widell. Therefore, the 35 U.S.C. § 102 rejection of claims 1-4, 6-9, 14-16, 28 and 29 should be withdrawn.

CLAIM REJECTIONS - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 11-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Widell (2,825,407). Applicant respectfully traverses the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection of the claims.

As discussed above, claim 1 is patentable over Widell. Therefore, claims 11-13 are patentable by virtue of their dependency from claim 1. Thus, the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection of claims 11-13 should be withdrawn.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Claims 10 and 13 have been allowed, and claims 19-27 and 30-34 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Applicant has rewritten objected to claims 19, 23, 24, 27, and 30 in independent form and thus claims 19-27 and 30-34 are in immediate condition for allowance.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Applicant herewith petitions the Director of the USPTO to extend the time for reply to the above-identified Office Action for an appropriate length of time if necessary. Unless a check is attached, any fee due under 37 U.S.C. § 1.17(a) is being paid via the USPTO Electronic Filing System (EFS). The USPTO is also directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

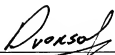
Respectfully submitted,

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

23373

CUSTOMER NUMBER



Nataliya Dvorson, Reg. No. 56,616 FOR
Kelly G. Hyndman
Registration No. 39,234

Date: November 16, 2006